



**HAMADRICH**



**LE'MADRICHEI CHAVOT**

## **Ha'madrich le'madrichei Chavot**

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*If you plant it, it will grow.  
(But you may have to help out.)*

## Chaverim,

Our tradition teaches: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy” (Psalms 126:5-6). The axiom of this *choveret* is that on this particular topic, the sages were only half right. Perhaps a better saying would have been “They who reap in joy, surely must have sowed themselves – and that was probably pretty fun, too”. While the harvesting may be the “fun” part, it is the preparation, planting, caring, anticipation, learning and everything else than we do to nurture a seed into food which gives the harvesting true meaning – and thus true joy.

The goal of this *choveret* is to facilitate this seed-to-food process at Habonim Dror *machanot* in the most educational, most meaningful, and most productive way possible.

While Habonim began as a labor Zionist youth movement with manual labor and agriculture somewhere near the center of its ideology three generation ago, this particular facet of our movement has slowly lost relevance. But, with the recent surge in the New Food Movement, and its association to local, healthy food, responsibility to the earth, and good working conditions, farming has suddenly become relevant again.

These values are exactly what led my interest into food and farming, and what led me to study agroecology at school. They are also what convinced me that a vastly expanded gan was a perfect fit to Tavor. But with more time in the movement, a growing connection to my Jewish identity and an ever-expanding understanding of my, and my movement’s, responsibility towards the Jewish people, the core reasons for me to insist on including agriculture throughout the movement changed.

It is my hope that as food and farming continue to expand in Habonim, with help from the New Food Movement’s momentum, and all those parents who suddenly think that pick-your-own-green beans lies somewhere between *tikun-olam* and the bringing the messiah, this *choveret* will help us shift our agricultural-educational focus from those of environment, labor and economy (though they are so important) to our core movement values: those inherent to our identity as Jewish Zionists. How to incorporate these values into your educational structure are the focus of the second half of the *choveret* (p32-p56).

But, don’t worry, you’re not about to read a tomb on the importance of the farming in the movement with out getting a clue on how to carry it out (we’re way past the first *Aliya*). The *chava* structure itself did not need to change much in order to accommodate the shift in the educational rationale. This “how-to” section of the *choveret* makes up the entire first half (p6-p31). This is not a replacement for a real gardening book. It is a supplement designed for our particular summer camp environment.

Follow this guide and I promise you two things:

1. A harvest. 2. A journey

**בהצלחה!**

Ilan --- May 18, 2009

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## PREFACE

Gordon said on labor “This is what we do not have, but we are not aware of missing it “.The same may be said of a *Habonim Dror* machaneh without a farm (hitherto called by the Hebrew, *chava*). It may seem fine at first, but with any further observation you will quickly discover that without it something is missing, empty, or wasted. There are hundreds of reasons why you should have a *chava* at your *machaneh* but let’s get started with three:

**1. A *chava* is the best way to teach Zionism:** When Jews began moving en masse to Palestine at the end of the 19th century they turned their hearts and hands to the soil. While it’s easy to shrug this off as pioneers responding to the needs of the day –namely employment and feeding the incoming nation – their writings clearly suggest otherwise. For Zionism was never solely about political emancipation of the Jewish people in Palestine; it was about the regeneration of the nation, via the regeneration of every individual, into a new, independent, un-alienated, more human person. This transformation could happen only through a new relationship towards labor and the land. Our nation today still needs regeneration; the lessons of the land are still important for all of us to learn; and a farm at your machaneh could still be the creator of that change.

**2. A *chava* is the best way to teach Judaism:** How many words are there for “to pick” in Hebrew? Eight. One for each of the seven species plus one for everything else. Why so many words? Because Judaism as we know it (or don’t know it) is based on an agricultural society. Holidays and festivals are agricultural cycles. *Tzedek* and *tzdaka* are obligatory harvest donations. The *shmita* and the jubilee are land rights and labor laws. While most Jews have actively or passively ignored this potentially inconvenient connection, we would do ourselves much good to embrace it. For too much of the secular Jewish community, especially young people, Judaism had become foreign, strange, and an annoying obligation a few times a year. The agricultural, environmental, and social components of the Jewish tradition, things that Jewish youth today could get excited over, may be the best way to reconnect these lost generations with the cycles, customs, and religion of their people. From now on consider the *chava* your new beit kneset. Praying for rain can finally mean something again! Your enthusiasm will go way up, and Judaism may finally feel relevant.

**3. A *chava* is fun, exciting, educational, delicious, nutritious, community-building, environmental, and socially just:** Use the chava to talk about modern labor struggles. Meet the neighbors at the village compost heap. Compare the energy used to bring a tomato from Meijer from seed-to-salad to the one you grew at machaneh. Is a tomato which harmed the land, workers, and fish, while contributing to global warming kosher? Draw a picture. Cucumber plants can be a little prickly. OMG. Can I eat that lettuce? What kind of bug is that? You farm too?

Okay, that's three. Maybe three and a half. Now let's move on.



## FOUR THINGS YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE YOU START

**1. You must plant well before the first day of *machaneh*:** Obviously you want a farm at your *machaneh*. Who wouldn't after seeing all the great reasons why? But it's not that simple. The first summer I was put in charge of the gan, I was given the *tafkid* during construction, five days before the *chanichim* were going to arrive. I had never gardened before. I was slightly nervous. I read a bunch of books in the *cheder chinuch* (*Square Foot Gardening* by Mel Bartholomew, I think), made a plan, and ran to the Rakazet Chinuch to report and ask for some advice. She told me something like "Relax. Plants grow themselves. That's what they want to do." Helpful words!

In one way, she was right. Most of the seeds and plants we planted did grow. Plants are pretty good at that. She was also wrong, though. Nothing we planted was ready for harvest by the last *avoda* of second session. The *chanichim* had been bored and distracted most of the time. The water fight was nice but not so relevant to our *messima*. On the last day I stole a case of cucumbers from the mitbach, hid them among the plants, and told the *chanichim* to find them. Our first harvest: pre-waxed and stickered! Amazing.

What's the lesson here? Plants do pretty much grow themselves, but you've got to help them out. Most importantly, you have to know how long it's going to take for your vegetables to grow (tugging on them will not help!) and plant them accordingly. You don't want all of your harvest to come on the last day, either. A session full of weeding and watering without a single taste will not accomplish your educational goals. This means you are going to have to plant before June 20. June 1 could work. May 1 is great. April 1 is ideal.

**2. A *chava* is going to cost your *machaneh* money:** While I would love to think of a farm as something that will save *machaneh* money, it probably won't - especially not in its first year. Later on, with less start up costs and more practice, it's doable. But to get started (tools, a fence, plants, seeds, a specialist) it is going to cost some green (not leaves). Your *machaneh* may not want to support this. They may think you are irresponsible, or too ideological, or that their money would be better spent on a Blob in the lake.

When I wanted to start the *chava* at Tavor, I got a reluctant “fine” after a lot of nudging, with permission to use the *mirpa’a* for lodging, leftover dry storage and the *mitbach* for eating, and a budget of \$0, while I lived on site in May. I said thanks, got my aunt to give me \$300 and got started. Later, we were paid \$400 to clean the *bayit*. A generous parent gave me \$20 on visitors day in exchange for mint, basil, and four cucumbers. We sold \$70 worth of squash to the local co-op. With \$790, we worked out fine. I think we could have managed on \$500. \$1000 would have been more comfortable and should be your goal.

**3. It is not that easy to make 8-12 year olds useful in the *chava* - but you must:** One of the main goals should be to have the *chanichim* feel like they are creating their *chava* – not just playing in your *chava*. As Martin Buber said in “Education” (1925) “Man, the child of man, wants to make things. He does not merely find pleasure in seeing a form arise from material that presented itself as formless. What the child desires is its own share in this becoming of things: it wants to be the subject of this event of production.” In other words the kid who shows his mom the carrot he grew on visitors day is the happiest kids in the world.

There is lots of work very young people can do on the farm. During the summer, they should actually be doing most of it. You just need to show them very specifically. It doesn’t take much for “suckering” tomatoes plants to become “cut” tomatoe plants. Do not assume they know anything. Do treat them with lots of respect. Older *chanichim* should be encouraged to engage with the younger ones, be given roles of responsibility, and be involved with mid-summer *chava* decisions.

**4. It can be challenging to put the food you grow to good use:** You may find yourself with 20 pounds of the best lettuce in the world and nothing to do with it. The *mitbach* may have their meal plans for the next month, and your local food bank may only accept non-perishables. Make sure you have a supportive *mitbach* crew. In the beginning of the summer tell them about what they can expect and when. Update them weekly during the summer. Make sure it is clear who is responsible for washing the vegetables. The most rewarding moment for anyone in anaf *chava* is eating their food in the *chadar ochel*. Composting your produce is not good. It can be disheartening to you and all of the people who worked to bring forth the food from the earth, and is stupid.

If you tackle these issues from the beginning – getting the *chava* planted and financed, making the kids useful, and making the food useful – you can’t go wrong. From there, anything is possible.



## **HOW TO MAKE A MINI-CHAVA AT YOUR MACHANEH:**

In 2004 I did work and research for 10 weeks at Cedar Meadow Farm just outside of Lancaster, PA. Cedar Meadow is not an organic farm, but it has been given considerable attention for its positive environmental impact, nonetheless. What is interesting about Cedar Meadow, and why it has garnered so much attention is not about what farm does, it's about what it doesn't do: plow. By not turning or disturbing the soil for more than 20 years Steve Groff, a second generation farmer, has nearly stopped erosion – thus stopping polluting runoff into the watershed, and protecting his farm's greatest asset – the soil. The first day I got there Steve told me, "There are a million ways to farm; I'm going to show you what works for me." Perhaps a bit postmodern, but in the five years since, I have discovered time and again how correct he was. The amount of ways to farm equals roughly the amount of people who have ever planted a seed. Still, I think some ways are more right than others. This is my general recommendation for creating a large garden, which kids will work in, and which will give a continuous harvest throughout the summer. Do not be limited by these suggestions. This is just a guide. What works best at Tavor is not what will work best at Moshava.

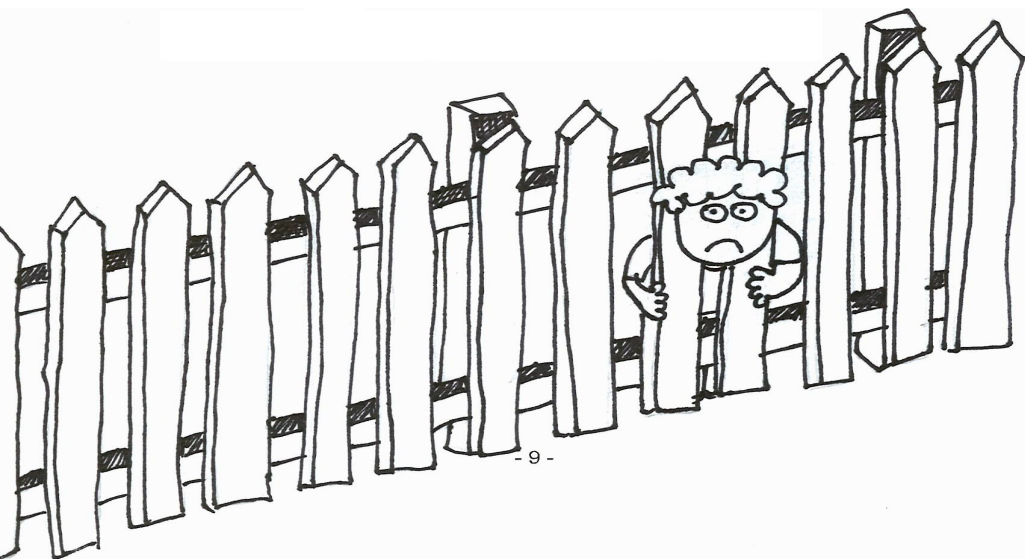
I repeat: this is just a guide.

## First things first: Build a fence

You want to do all you can to protect your chava. The first step is to build a fence. A simple fence should stop most rabbits, squirrels, and even deer from messing with you. Deer can jump your fence, but probably won't bother. Raccoons, minks, and a few other pests can climb your fence. If they are a big problem for you, you may want to consider electric fencing (which is not as scary as it sounds), or some sort of organic repellent (e.g. garlic and chilly pepper blended in lots of water) sprayed around the fence.

Here is how you put up a fence:

1. Dig a trench about 1 foot deep around the perimeter of you gan
2. Pound in a 5' T post at each corner using a post hole driver
3. Pound in more 5' T posts in between so there is no more than 8' between posts
4. Attach 5' fencing to the T posts using metal wire and pliers
5. Fill in the trench with the soil that you moved when you dug it. The fencing should now be partially buried in the soil. This keeps animals from crawling under.
6. Create some sort of gate so you don't lock yourself inside!



## Light Cultivation + Cover crops

I really do hate plowing, but you're going to have to do it once. The main goal of cultivation (plowing, tilling, turning, etc) is to create a soil surface where your vegetable plants will have a competitive advantage over any other plants in the area (from now on called weeds). Since you are probably putting your chava in a place which formerly had perennial grass, you are going to have to kill the grass with cultivation if you want your vegetables to stand a chance (or use herbicide, but we don't tend to roll that way).

There are 4 ways you can cultivate:

1. *Have your caretaker plow with a tractor, or find someone else who can plow for you:* This is the simplest for you since it saves a lot of work. It also means the turned soil will be waiting for you when you first get to machaneh, so you'll be one big step closer to planting. Plus, a plow is ecologically better and gentler on your soil than a rototiller (imagine having your bed turned over versus being thrown in a giant blender)

*Some things to look out for if you choose this route:*

- If you're not there, whoever is plowing may do it in the wrong place. Be very specific!
- Plowing may not kill plants as well as a rototiller.
- Tractors are very heavy. Even while plowing they could compact your soil. But I wouldn't worry about it for a one time thing.
- You can't save the grass for your walkways

2. *Rent a roto-tiller and do it yourself:* This method ensures that you till where you want to till. You can even save the grass in the alleys. It's very fun and very hard work. It will give you loose soil and kill just about any plants in your way.

*Some things to look out for if you choose this route:*

- Bad for soil life (remember the blender). Don't do it twice.
- It will take up a lot of the time of your first visit
- Very loose soil is prone to compaction. Stay off once you've tilled!

3. *Shovel and Digging fork:* This is the most labor intensive way – but it's free! It gives you the positives of plowing, the preciseness of tilling, and probably a bad back to whine about all summer. This is what you do:

If you have thick grass you will have to remove it. Use a flat head shovel to cut it into 1 ft squares and just pry it up. Loosen the soil using a digging fork. Kick the digging fork deep into the ground. Loosen and pry up the soil. Continue for the entire bed. If you've read something about

double digging, don't do it. It's not worth the work.

*Some things to look out for if you choose this route:*

- Lots of very hard work. Don't say I didn't warn you.
- It will take up most to all of your first visit.
- You will end up with a bed that is lower than your walkway. This is very bad for drainage. Try to make up the difference with free compost from nearby. Lightly mix the compost into the soil. You do not want to plant into pure compost.

*4. Carboard and compost. This may be the simplest way and is very effective and killing the weeds and recycling their nutrients. Just lay down two layers of cardboard with two to three inches of compost on top early in the season. This will smother the plants underneath and by the time you need to plant, the cardboard will have deteriorated, or gotten so flimsy and weak you can just rip holes in it. Some things to look out for if you choose this route:*

- It may get annoying to cover a very large area with cardboard.
- You must do this will in advance of your first planting no order to give time for the weeds to die and the cardboard to decompose. Two weeks minimum. Four weeks ideal.

This first season is the only time you should cultivate. When you harvest something too late in the season to replant, plant a cover crop. A

cover crop is a plant which will grow instead of weeds in your bed, cover the soil over the winter, add nutrients, and be dead and easy to remove next year. Common cover crops include winter rye, crimson clover, etc... Buy one big sack of one type from the same place you bought your seeds. To plant, just sprinkle handfuls over the soil and go over with a rake to make sure there is good seed-to-soil contact. When you arrive next spring just pull out or cut the cover crop, and start planting. Use the plants as mulch, or throw right to the compost.



## **Raised beds**

Raised beds are the surface within the chava where you will actually grow your vegetables. It is only raised in that it is higher than the walkways to its sides. There is no building, or wood, or structures associated with your raised bed. Raised beds heat up slightly quicker in the spring giving your plants a head start, prevent flooding to plants during storms, allow you to grow more vegetables in less space, prevent soil compaction, and very clearly indicate to curious chanichim exactly where they should and shouldn't walk. I recommend all beds be 4' wide with 2' wide alleys for walking in between them. This seems to be the ideal width for allowing kids to easily work in the garden and reach every plant without stepping on the bed (or the plants).

Here is how you "build" a bed:

### *1. If you had the land plowed*

- a. Mark out a 4' wide bed and a 2' wide walkway next to it with string
- b. Dig about 6" into your walkways throwing the soil on the bed.
- c. Rake and break apart the clumps on the bed. You are done when you have a bed with a fine layer of soil about 9" higher than the walkway.
- d. If you have access to compost add an inch or so and mix with the soil
- e. Voila! A raised bed.

### *2. If you rototilled*

- a. By only roto-tilling the beds, and not the walkways you essentially made a raised bed.
- b. The air that you added by tilling increased the volume of the soil
- c. Be especially careful not to step on it. You are setting yourself up for compaction
- d. If you have access to compost add an inch or so and mix with the soil
- e. Voila! A raised bed.

### *3. If you Shovel and Digging forked*

- a. You have something close to a raised bed already.
- b. To get it higher you are going to have to add some compost or fill.
- c. Voila! A raised bed.

From now on, you only walk on the walkways. Raised beds work so well because they are able to remain filled with air (i.e. not compact), with their ecology intact forever. Always work from the walkways. You probably can jump over the beds, but the chanichim can't. Be a good example and walk

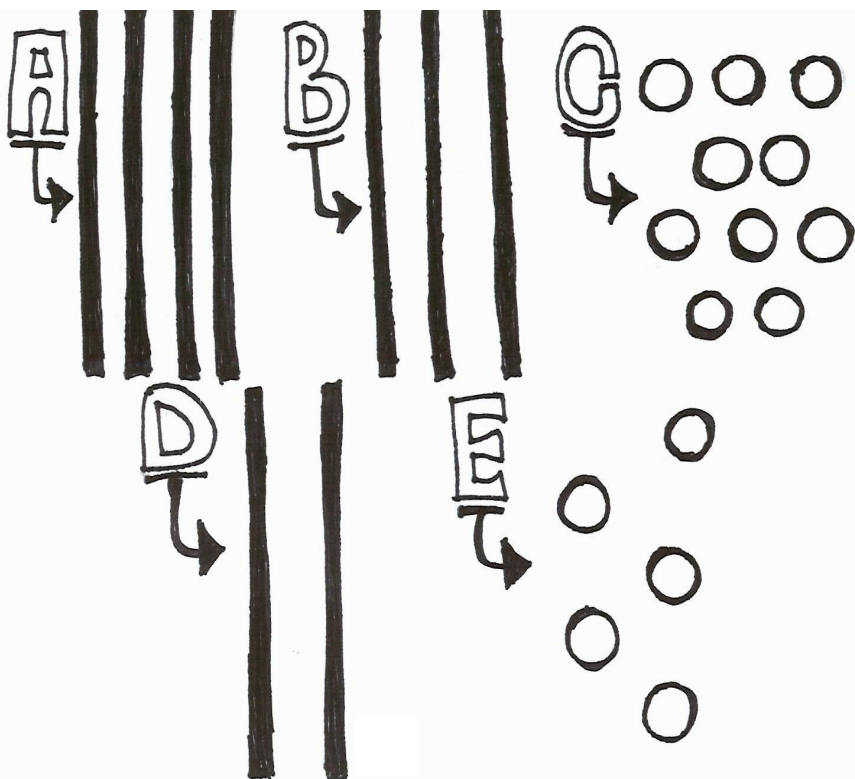
around every time.

Congratulations! You have a *chava*. It may look soemthing like the image on page 29-30. This is the stage I like to call the Zen row chava. It's beautiful, isn't it? You can practically feel the potential. Maybe you don't want to grow vegetables at all. If you weed every day, your chava can look exactly as it does today all summer! But probably, you do want some veggies. Now you just have to grow stuff.

## Growing your plants

*Planting in a raised bed is very simple:*

- If you are planting from seed, carve a little trough in the bed with a stick, as long as you like. Then go back and drop in the seeds. Cover them with the soil you pushed aside. You don't want the birds to see them!
  - If you are transplanting, stand on the walkway, dig a hole, drop in the plant, and push the soil firmly on the plant.
- A. 4 rows per bed for small leafy things like leaf lettuce, arugula, spinach, etc .
- B. 3 rows per bed for medium (mostly root) things like radishes, carrots, beets, basil, etc.
- C. Alternating 3 and 2 for larger, but not tall things like cauliflower, broccoli...
- D. 2 rows for tall fruiting things like tomatoes, eggplants, corn, peas, beans...
- E. Alternating 1 and 1 for large, crawling things like cucumbers, melons, gourds...



## *Thinning*

Small seeded vegetables (mostly lettuces, other greens, and radishes) will need to be thinned. This means plucking out plants which are growing too close to each other in order to let one plant grow well.

- Check a gardening book for proper spacing and thin away.
- You can use your hands or a hand-held hoe.

## *Mulching*

Mulching is key to organic gardening. Mulch smothers weeds, regulates soil temperature, preserves moisture, provides habitat for good bugs, and slowly decomposes into nutrients for you plants. And it's free. Here's how you do it:

- Find some. Mulch can be practically anything. Most farms today use plastic. Don't. I suggest mixing grass clippings with old leaves. Newspaper, shredded or not can work fine, but it's pretty ugly. Choose anything that used to be a plant. Whatever it is, you should let it dry out before you apply it.
- Apply the mulch around your plant. You should aim for 2 inches high on the whole bed.
- If you are waiting for seedlings to emerge, don't apply it yet. Small plants have a hard time coming up through mulch (that's the point, remember?)
- If you are transplanting you should first apply the mulch and then dig the hole and plant. It will save you the hassle of trying not to damage your plants.
- For the smallest things, like leaf lettuce, don't worry about mulch. You planted them close enough together that in a week or two, they will serve as there own mulch. Cool!



## Weeding

The mulch will keep down most of the weeds. But you still have some work to do:

- If there are weeds before you get a chance to mulch, or weeds that came up while you were waiting for your seeds to sprout use a hoe to gently wipe them away. Watch out for your veggie plants.
- Weeds that have popped through the mulch should just be pulled by hand. Do not attempt to use a hoe on a mulched bed.
- If you weed a full bed every day, you won't have a problem. If you let the weeds get a head of you, it's hard to catch up. But you can.
- Don't worry if you have some weeds. You're going for lots of vegetables, not zero weeds. The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

## Watering

You need to keep your plants watered. But not too watered. The first time gardener has a tendency to way overwater the garden leading to at best a waste of water and time, and at worst drowning your plants and building up of fungal communities that damage your vegetables. How often should you water then? You should water when the soil at root level is very dry. So, seeds and seedling with zero to very little roots should be watered almost every-non rainy day. Larger plants should be watered when the soil (not mulch) 1-2 inched deep is very dry. You can check by shoving your finger in the soil. If soil sticks to your finger, it's fine. It doesn't, it's dry. Tada. The best time to water is early in the morning as the sun is coming out. Doing it during *avoda* is fine, too. Note that certain vegetables have specific watering needs at different stages of growth. For example, tomatoes need zero watering when the fruits are ripening. Water can cause the tomatoes to split. Read a lot more about it in gardening books and follow if you can.

I can think of five ways to water

1. *Faucet and watering bucket*: This isn't a bad idea if you want to make lots of work for chanichim to do during *avoda*. It also allows you to be very specific about quantity and placement of water. The work, however, is very hard and I certainly would not recommend it if you are working alone. If you are going to go with this, invest in a few good watering cans. It's worth it.

2. *Very long hose*: 200' of hose should be more than enough to allow you to get to all of your gan. This means you never have to carry heavy buck-

ets of water, and still lets you be very specific about quantity and placement of water. It can be a little tricky to navigate up and down the rows without damaging plants. It is certainly doable, but not recommended for young chanichim. It also allows only one person to work on watering at a time. If you are going to go with this, invest in a good hose nozzle. It's way better than your finger.

3. *Sprinklers*: This is the least efficient in terms of amount of water to reach plants, but is the least work in terms of set up and time spent watering. I think the sprinklers which go back and forth (not around) work very well for keeping seeds and seedlings moist. I wouldn't recommend sprinklers for watering bigger plants. Note that you will still need a long hose for proper placement.

4. *Drip irrigation*: The invention of drip is one of Israel's greatest contributions to the modern world (Peace, coexistence, and good governance, sadly, are not on the list). Drip is certainly the most efficient in terms of water use. It saves the world katrillions of gallons a year, but, for you, who lives in a fairly rainy climate with plenty of water, the advantages are not so great. It also has some rather annoying drawbacks. With the simplest drip systems you will have to water all of your chava the same amount every time. For the price of some extra gizmos you can fix this. Drip also takes away any watering-associated work during avoda. They are slightly challenging to set up your first time, but don't worry about that too much. You can probably set up a simple drip system for \$200-\$300 depending on the size of your gan. This is for the length of 2 strips of drip tape per bed, 2 connectors per bed, one main line, one filter, and one connector to the hose. Fedco and Jonnies both sell drip systems, so just buy it with your seeds. The second year you'll only need to replace the tape (\$50-\$100). I would consider buying enough to water just one or two beds. This will allow you to see it, and talk about it (Go Israel!), without all the drawbacks.

5. *Don't water*. This may sound crazy, but I can think of many summers at Tavor with at least one large storm per week. This is more than enough (with mulch) to support most plants more than a month old. If you can find a way to get all your plants started, and you have wet enough weather, you may not need to water much after that at all. A rain dance or festival (*Shavuot?*) may help.

## *Plant Protection*

But what about the bugs? The best offence is a good defense. By planting lots of different species, in a healthy ecosystem, in nutrient rich soil you are already avoiding 90% of potential infestations. This does not mean you will not have pests. A buzz phrase right now in organic and non-organic circles is Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This is jargon for using many strategies to prevent and fight off infestations. Pesticides are generally included in IPM as a last resort. I do not recommend this for your garden. Try this for IPM

1. *Deter*: .... Check. To increase your deterrence, cycle plants every year. Do not plant the same vegetable (or even the same family) in the same bed two years in row. You may also want to experiment with companion planting (check out *Carrots Love Tomatoes*)
2. *Observe*: Check your plants for insect damage. A bug on your plant is not bad. Holes, scabs, and missing leaves are. Take a sample, identify it in a book or on the internet and see if there is anything you can do.
3. *Remove*: Physically remove / squash the insects. Calling all *Ame-lim*!
4. *Spray*: Don't worry. It's not what you think. Blend chili pepper flakes (or your own chilies!) and garlic with lots of water in the mitbach. Put in spray bottles and go wild. Make sure to spray the tops and bottoms of the leaves.
5. *Do nothing*: If nothing is helping, you may just want to do nothing. Losing one crop out of twenty is not disaster.
6. *Remove the plants*: If you have nearby veggies of the same family, you may want to remove and compost the plants. Better one loss than ten.

## *Harvesting*

You can probably figure most of this out by yourself. Lettuce, squash, and other vegetables you cut should be done with a sharp knife or scissors, so as not to damage the still-producing plant. Chanichim can handle this with supervision. Make sure you have a good way to haul your food to the *mitbach*. You should also make sure there is a clear understanding between you and the mitbach regarding who is responsible for cleaning the veggies – especially lettuce. DO NOT just throw a bunch of random dirty veggies in the *mitbach* when no one is looking.

## EXPECTED CHAVA COSTS

You've already been warned. Creating your chava is not going to be free. Here are some expected costs. Of course, depending on your budget, you could spend much more, or much less.

**Construction budget:** *Note that potentially significant costs of food, lodging, and transportation are not included.*

Item	Quantity	Cost / unit	Total Cost
Plow service	1	\$100	\$100
Plastic 5' fencing	300 ft	\$.50/ft	150
6' T posts	30	\$5	\$150
Gate	1	Imporvise	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$400</b>

**Tools Budget:** *You will probably already have most of this, but....*

Tool	Q	Cost / unit	Total Cost
T Post driver for the fence	1	\$20	\$20
Round point shovel for digging beds	3	\$10	\$30
"Action" hoe for light weeding	2	\$15	\$30
Garden hoe for heavy weeding	2	\$10	\$20
Wheelbarrow for hauling compost / mulch	1	\$70	\$70
Trowel for transplanting	3	\$7	\$21
200' Hose way better than fiddling with connectors	1	\$130	\$130
Hose nozzle	1	\$10	\$10
Oscillating Sprinkler	1	\$15	\$15
Steel rake for spreading compost / mulch	2	\$10	\$20
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$366</b>

**Sample Plants Budget:** (Next page) *Numbers taken from jonnies.com. Note that the larger the unit you buy, the cheaper it is. It may be cheaper to buy more than you need (i.e. lettuce) than exactly what you need.*

Bed	Vegetable	Plant date	Bed-Ft	Rows / bed	Row-foot	Seeds or plants / ft	Q	Seeds / unit	Cost / unit	Q	Total cost
1	Snow peas <i>Snow sweat</i>	April 15	100	2	200	12	2200	1800/lb	7.1	2	14.2
2	Kale <i>Starbor (F1)</i>	May 1	50	3	150	1	150	250/packet	3.85	1	3.85
	Carrot <i>Mokum</i>	April 15	50	4	200	6	1200	1200/packet	3.75	1	3.75
3	Bush beans <i>Provider</i>	June 1 or after frost	100	2	200	.75	150	175/packet	2.45	1	2.45
4	Leaf lettuce, <i>Simpson Elite</i>	May 1 and after	50	4	200	10	2000	26000/oz	7.40	1	7.40
	Radish	Avoda end of June	50	4	200	12	2400	3000/oz	4.70	1	4.70
5	Tomatoes	June 1 or after frost	180	2	360	1 P / 2'	90	1 plant	.5		45
6	Peppers	June 1 or after frost	25	2.5	62.5	1 P	62	1 plant	.5		31
	Basil <i>Genovese</i>	June 1 or after frost	50	3	150	3 P	450	18000/oz	5.95	1	5.95
	Beets <i>Early Wonder</i>	June 1 or after frost	25	3	75	4 P	300	385/packet	2.30	1	2.30
7	Cucumbers	June 1 or after frost	50	2	100	1 P / 3'	33	1 plant	.5		16.5
	Squash	June 1 or after frost	50	2	100	1 P / 3;	33	1 plant	.5		16.5
							<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>153.6</b>

## SOME EXTRA IDEAS TO SPICE-UP YOUR *CHAVA*

**Spices (herbs):** Don't forget to plant herbs in your garden. Pesto for the whole *machaneh* is a very reasonable goal. Grow some dill and your pickles will be almost entirely *chava* grown. There are lots of herbs to try. They smell great, taste hundreds of times better than the dry stuff in the *mitbach* and can be harvested whenever necessary. Many herbs have pest deterring properties, too.

**Perennials:** Perennial are plants which will come back year after year all by themselves. Loading your *chava* with perennials means that even if no one plants anything next year, you'll still have a harvest. Chives, mint, and lemon balm are some of the more exciting perennial herbs for kids. The *mitbach* will go wild over farm fresh strawberries (choose Everbearing, not Junebearing), asparagus (but your harvest will be over before the kids get there) and rhubarb. Grapes (fall seminar harvest), hops and other vines will look great growing up your fence. You'll probably want to buy most of these plants as cuttings, crowns, or root stocks. You could also try to grow them by seed in containers all summer and plant them towards the end of the summer. Either way you probably won't get fruit for one to two years after you plant. Balance your desire to harvest now with the excitement of building permanence for the future.

**Hang out space:** You want your *gan* to be a center of *machaneh* life, not just a center of work. This means you should try to get the *chanichim* into the *gan* for hanging out, yoga, story time, science exploration, arts and crafts, and various *peulot* all the time. In order to save the plants, and ensure comfort for all build a discussion circle / corner / semicircle into your plans. If you want to get real fancy throw in a canopy, some vines, and straw bails, and you've got yourself an outdoor classroom / *moadon*.

**Signs:** Make the *chava* a real part of *machaneh*. Have a big sign welcoming everyone to the “Bala-Gan” or whatever you want to call it. Label all of the vegetables in English and Hebrew. Hang quotes from the bible, facts about food, statistics about hunger, whatever else you want, from your fences. This, of course, is a perfect project for chanichim and will immediately give them a sense of ownership and a deeper understanding of the point of the *chava*.

**Compost:** Obviously you should compost. You can easily compost all non-dairy, non-oily, non-meat food scraps from the mitbach in your chava. If you can train your chanichim well, you can compost food leftovers as well. You can read a lot about compost, but here are the most important things to know

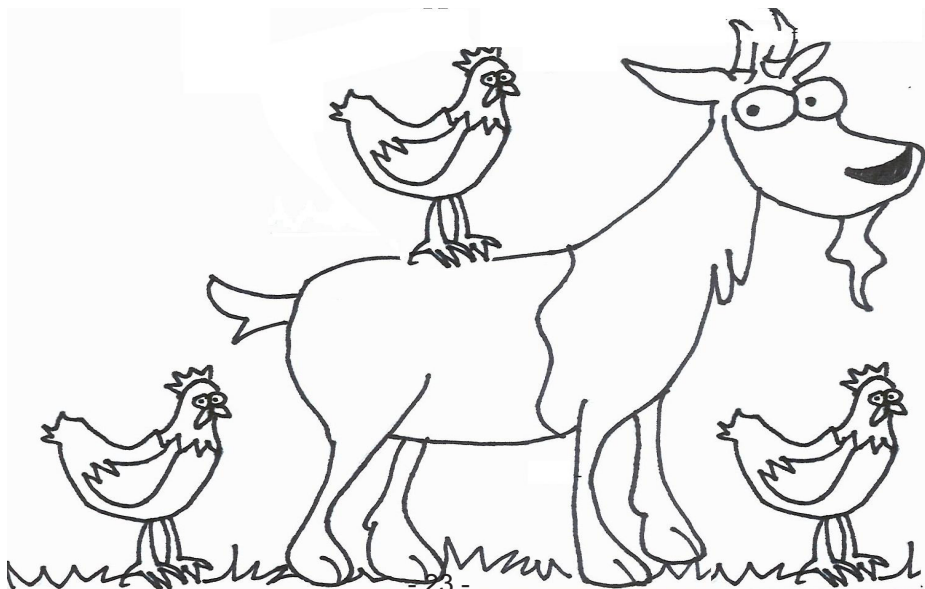
1. Create a structure to hold the compost. Four wooden pallets wired together with one allowed to open as a gate works great. Anything that will hold an approximately 3'X3'X3' pile is fine. Line the ground with at least three inches of dry, organic, materials. Old leaves are probably your best bet.
2. Build another one right next to that one.
3. Clarify who is responsible for bringing the compost to the compost heap AND who is responsible for bringing the compost buckets back to the mitbach / chadar ochel.
4. Every time compost is brought to the pile, it should be covered with more dry, organic, material. Not covering it will attract all sorts of creatures. The pile should always be approximately 50% food scraps (wet), 50% dry.
5. When the container is full move to the next one.
6. Two or three weeks later, turn the first pile. The easiest way is just to scrape out all of the contents with a steel rake, and shovel it back into place. This should be the only smelly-ish experience of the compost. Cover again with leaves.
7. Two big heaps should be enough for the summer, if not, build another one.
8. That's it. Free nutrients, an educational experience for the whole *machaneh*, and a lower garbage bill. Spread on the beds next year.

**Animals:** No *chava* is complete without animals. They play many important roles in the agroecological cycle and will really give you a down-on-the-farm feel. Try to get animals you will use – not just pet. Chickens are very easy to take care of and will give you some eggs. You'll need a lot to feed the whole *machaneh* but just 20 chickens could give you 100 eggs a week. Kids love finding them and will quickly develop relationships with the chickens which will teach them about care, affection, and responsibility. Chickens will be happy to eat most of your weeds and any bugs they can find. Throw them some chicken “feed” just to make sure.

In 2008 Tavor brought in two pigs in order to reinforce the “compost / potential” theme of the summer. (I don't think there is any rule against raising them outside of the land of Israel.) They ate everything from the *mitbach* that would have been thrown away (including meat, milk, and oils) and turned it into beautiful compostable manure. They were a lot of work but VERY popular with the *chanichim*.

A milking goat would be amazing but demands every single day care and a little more expertise. Try at your own risk.

The biggest challenge with animals is where to get them and what to do with them at the end of the summer. The easiest solution is to see if there is a farm nearby who will rent you the animals, or maybe you have a *chanich* who lives on a farm. You may even get them for free if you fatten them up. The coolest thing to do with chickens would be to raise them yourself and have a few *madrichim* take 3-5 home and care for them during the year. Let me know how that goes.





## GETTING THE WHOLE *MACHANEH* (AND MORE) INVOLVED

***Machneh:*** Do not let the wonders of the chava become the little secret between you and your *anaf*. Always be thinking of how you can get the rest of the *machaneh* involved. Here are some suggestions: (Bringing in 200 people to weed for an hour is not one of them)

- Every *shichva* should have at least one *peula* in the *chava*
- Open the *chava* for *chofesh*. A *madrich* should supervise
- All food eaten in the *chadar ochel* that is grown in the *chava* should be labeled as such
- Show off unusual vegetables, buckets of weeds, ready to use compost, etc at *hitcansut* (*mifkad*)
- Make sure to show everyone the *chava* as part of the first day tour
- On visitors day bring in the parents. Have them work. Give them food. You may even get a donation out of it.
- Ivrit in the gan. Learn plant names through games, or talk to the plants and animals in hebrew. It's fun because they dont judge you when you screw up!
- "Extreme weeding" for zman sport.
- Work with the omanut speciaist to do some nature art in the gan.
- Have a chug which does more crafty/experimenty things in the gan: Pickeling, flower bouquets, getting intimate with plants, scavenger hunts, fermenting...

**And everyone else, too...** You probably make fun of how the locals pronounce *Habonim*, but do you actually know any of them? The *chava* is a great way to meet lots of interesting people, get machaneh to be more a part of the community, and maybe land you some favors. Try these:

- Shop at local gardening stores. Say hello. Introduce yourself. Tell them what your are doing. Maybe they'll give you a discount. Or a donation?
- Sell your vegetables at a booth outside *machaneh*, or at a local store.
- Host a local youth group or summer camp at your *chava*. Teach them something nice.
- If there is a school right next door (Tavor!) see if any of the teachers would be interested in taking on the garden as a fall class project. If planned accordingly, your *chava* could keep producing well into October.

## **YOUR MACHANEH CHAVA: AN IDEAL MONTH BY MONTH GUIDE**

### **Feb - March:**

*Decide you are going to do it.*

- This may sound obvious but a chava is not going to build itself.
- Talk to your *rosh* / camp committee / caretaker and ask (or tell, depending on how your *machaneh* works) them of your plans

*Get a core team of 2-3.*

- Don't work alone
- See yourselves as taking responsibility over the *chava*
- Use this responsibility to bring in and include more people (co-tzevet, *chanichim*, parents, etc), not exclude them.

*Look for some money (\$300 minimum).*

- Your *machaneh* should provide it.
- If not, ask HDNA.
- If not, ask parents and friends, or just put it up yourself.
- If you're ambitious, apply for grants, but don't expect much.
- \$300 is the barest of bones. It will get you seeds, some plants, and hopefully enough stuff to put together a fence which won't fall down. \$600 is comfortable. \$1000 is a lot, but probably reasonable for the first year if you have to buy a lot of equipment.

*Read lots of garden books to get excited.*

- See Books (57) for suggestions
- Learn about what vegetables like to grow next to each other and other exciting tips that will help you maximize your harvest.
- Order a lot of seed catalogues online. They are free. Reading through them is very exciting.

*Think of where you want to put your chava. Things to consider:*

- Well drained
- Southern exposure,
- Near water source,
- Not too out of the way.
- You don't necessarily need all of these, but the more, the better.
- Where the gan is now is not necessarily the best place.

*Decide what and how much you are going to grow.*

- Create a map of your *chava*! Mark what you plant where, so next year you will be able to scheme and effective crop rotation.
- The basic technique recommended here is raised beds 4' wide and as

long as you want them. If you can make seven (or a multiple of) beds, you can do something cool and Jewish with it later.

- How many row-feet of plantable area do you have?
- What are you going to plant where?

#### *Buy some seeds.*

- I really like Fedco (<http://www.fedcoseeds.com/>) and Jonny's (<http://www.johnnyseeds.com/>), but you can also just buy them at a local garden store later.
- Maybe have a peula / get together and decide what seeds to buy together in order to generate some excitement.
- Do some basic math to figure out exactly how much of each seed you need. On every seed packet or label, it will tell you how many seeds to plant per foot, how far away each row should be, and how many seeds come in that packet or per weight.
- $\text{Bed-Feet} * \text{Rows} / \text{Bed} * \text{Weight of seeds needed} / \text{row-foot} = \text{weight of seeds you need.}$
- You may be tempted to plant 20 different varieties of 20 different vegetables when you see all of the different colors and sizes they come in, but seeds are much cheaper when bought in larger quantities and less variation can make farming simpler. I suggest two varieties max of any given vegetable. Sadly, the most significant factor in choosing seed varieties should be number of days to harvest. Boring vegetables are better than no vegetables.
- There is a really great planting guide with planting dates, seed spacing, and quantity of seeds per weight at [http://www.fedcoseeds.com/seeds/veggie\\_chart.htm](http://www.fedcoseeds.com/seeds/veggie_chart.htm)

#### *Prepare the soil*

- If this is your first summer, and the plot you've chosen is covered with grass, ask your caretaker to plow it (or find someone else who can).
- If your plot is real small you may prefer to roto-till it yourself or plow with shovels later .
- The land should actually be plowed 2-4 weeks before you start planting.
- If this is not your first summer, you do not have to plow! You should have a beautiful layer of easy to handle cover crop. Don't remove the cover crop until you are ready to plant. If it's alive, pull it up. If it's dead chop or mow it. Throw it in the compost or save for mulch.

#### **Late Mar - April:**

##### *Go to machaneh*

- Build a fence around the *chava*
- If you didn't have it plowed, rototill or dig two beds now.
- If you did have it plowed, prepare two beds.
- Plant something! You didn't come all the way up to machaneh for nothing. If you didn't get your seeds yet, go buy some.
- Things you can plant right now (cold hardy): Chard, Kale/Collards,

Onion sets, Rutabagas, radishes, carrots, snow peas etc.

- Give them some water. Rain should provide the rest.
- Do something fun
- Go back home

### **April:**

*You should try to go machaneh twice. That way, by the time May rolls around you already have a half ready chava growing lots of things.*

- When you come back you will find your plants growing plus some weeds. It's easy to indentify your crops since you planted them in a straight row. So, just look for what looks the same.
- Weed over all the rest with your hands or a small hoe.
- Mulch heavily (3+ inches) all around. Leave about a three inch circle around your far spaced crops (peas) and just a line around you closely sown crops (lettuce).
- Things you can plant: All of the same plus leaf lettuce and cabbage. They grow very quickly, so planting them before May causes them to be ready before there are people at machaneh to eat them.

### **May:**

*Keep this up. If you are creating something big, I suggest moving up to machaneh one month before machaneh begins. If you do:*

- Keep up the weeding and planting
- Do not plant non cold-hardy plants until the frost date has passed, or until you are sure there will not be another frost.
- Plant a new crop of lettuce every two weeks. You want the harvest to last you until the end of the summer.
- You may want to start medium-season non-cold hardy vegetables like basil, cucumbers, and squashes inside. Starting plants from seeds is easy: soil in container + heat +moisture + time (4-6 weeks) = ready to transplant. For more tips, read a book.
- Read and learn lots together.
- Eat chili.

*If it's not feasible to move to machaneh, just keep coming on the week-ends. Tend to your plants. Mulch. Haul compost. Plant more cold season stuff. Don't start plants. Just buy them later.*

### **After last frost (Mid May to Mid June):**

*You can now grow just about anything. Get everything in the ground ASAP to ensure a summer harvest!*

- Plant a lot of beans from seed! They grow fast, easy, and are delicious.
- Transplant everything else (either self started or bought). Basil, cucumbers, and squashes, tomatoes, peppers etc. Plant the earliest yielding variety of everything. For tomatoes and peppers, it is espe-

cially important to plant ASAP after the last frost, or you risk not having a machaneh harvest.

### **Chalutz**

- Have the entire *Tzevet* clear, prepare and plant 1-2 beds. Do *chava*-wide weeding.
- Run some peulot.
- It is important for everyone to know what is going on in the *chava*.

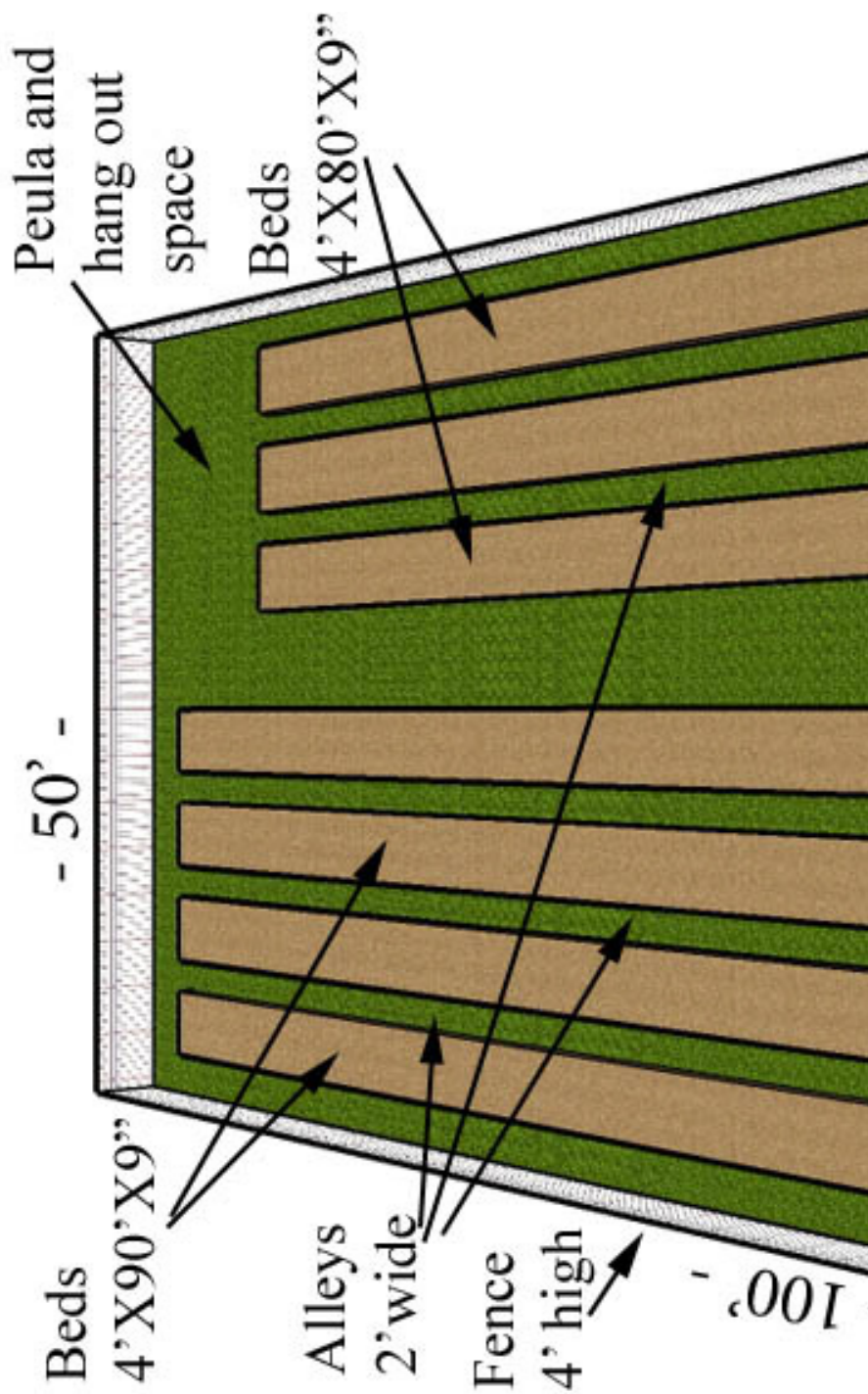
### **Machaneh**

- *Avoda* with *chanichim*
  - o Day 1: Have one bed prepared but not seeded, and one bed not yet prepared.
  - o Plant the first row with radishes, lettuces, or some other quick growing stuff.
  - o Prepare the last bed with the *chanichim*.
  - o Day 2: Talk a lot about what you are doing there. Don't assume *chanichim* will just get it.
  - o Rest of the days. Weed, water, harvest, prune, mulch, etc. Whenever you harvest something, add some compost, prepare seed bed, and plant some fast growing stuff. Your last planting should be the first day of 2nd session *avoda*. Radishes are the most likely to be ready for the planters to enjoy.
  - o I like to start every morning with a short reading, reflection, or game...
- *Peulot Shichva, Chugim Ritzinim / Shabbat Chugim, Zman Sport, Chofesh, Sadnaot*, etc...
  - o Anything! Read, draw, meditate, discuss. The world of Judaism, Zionism, agriculture, environment, and just about everything else are at your fingertips (toenails?).

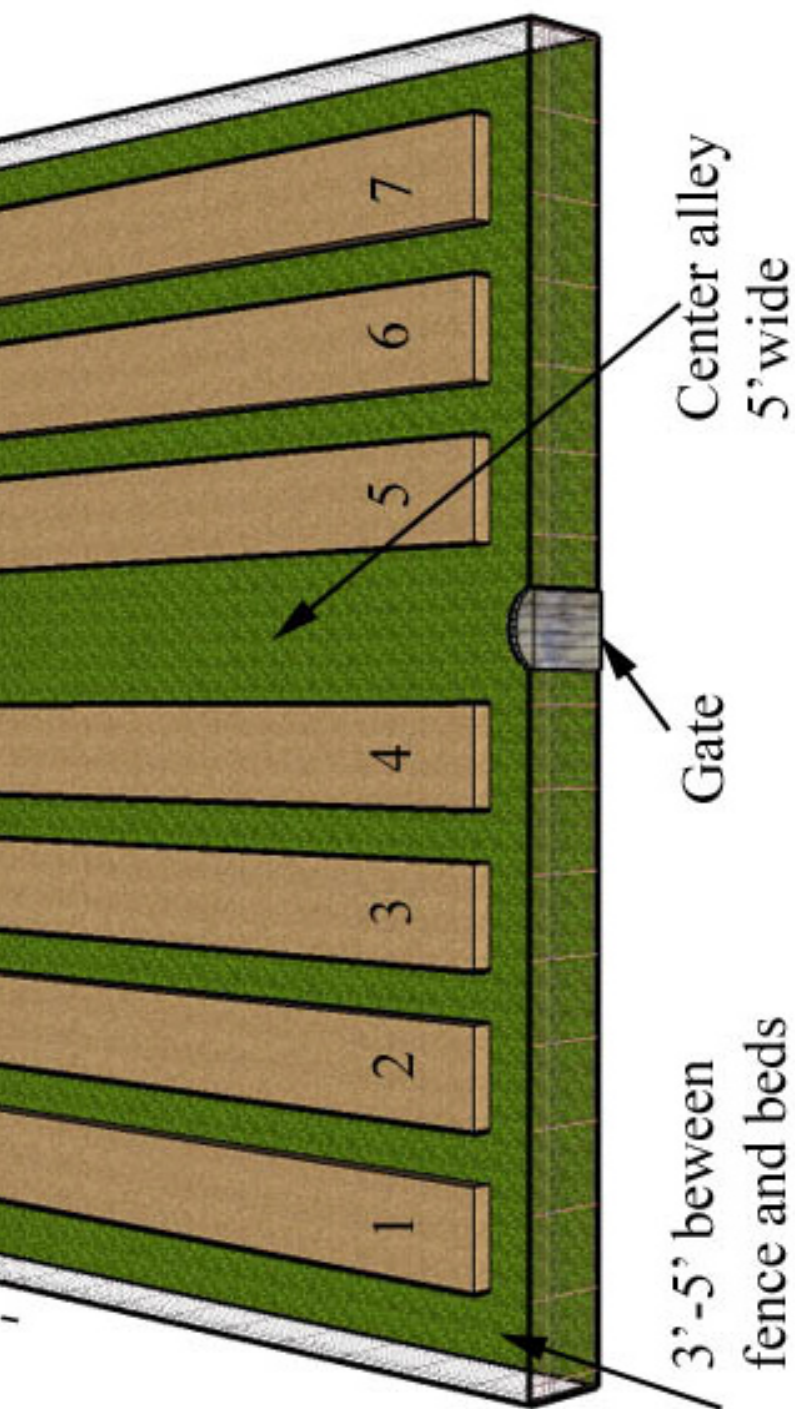
### **End of Machaneh**

- When you harvest something too late in the season to replant, plant a cover crop.
- Leave be fruiting plants which are still producing (tomatoes, eggplant, melon etc...), and root plants which you don't want to use now. You can come back at fall seminar and get a big ole' harvest.
- Harvest all leafy veggies you have. Leaving them will not be good. Unless you want to collect seed!

A sample *chava* planting Image courtesy of Jon Koller







- Clean all the tools and put them away.
- Close up the *chava*.

### **Seminar or other time in September – October**

- Harvest what's left
- If you have a really big last harvest, you may want to think about canning for next year. This will take some planning and materials but is a great idea. Let me know how it goes.
- Take out whatever is left and plant the cover crop.
- Plant some garlic if you like. It will be waiting for you next spring.

**Note:** *Remember that none of this has to be exact. If you can't start until May, fine. If you can't start until June, you can work something out, too. If you can't start until machaneh starts, it will be hard to grow anything but lettuce and radishes, but go for it! You may just want to use the summer to build the chava (fence, cultivation, beds, signs) with the chanichim, plant a cover crop and have it waiting for you for next year. Farming is flexible. Go with the flow.*





## **YOUR MACHANEH CHAVA: A JEWISH MONTH BY MONTH GUIDE**

The Jewish calendar represents the complete life of a civilization. It includes all components that the community needed to survive in its land. Thus, it is based on the agricultural cycles of the ancient people of the Land of Israel. Diaspora Judaism has adapted most of the holidays and detached them from their agricultural roots – as a result of the detachment of the people from the land itself – but getting back in touch is a great way to rebuild our connection to our heritage and understand the original meanings of our festivals. Your chava can help.

**Tu B'Shvat (Jan- Feb):** Have an environmental Tu B'shvat seder. Talk about food systems, plants, spring, whatever. Have each chanich plant a vegetable in a pot to take home. They should bring it to machaneh in a few months and grow it in the chava.

**Pesach (Mar-Apr):** Celebrate the karpas and coming of spring through a groundbreaking at the chava. Plant your first seeds, remove the cover, eat some matza, and go back home.

**May Day (May 1):** Talk about Judaism and labor laws and Jewish involvement in the world labor movement. Have a giant work day, dig and plant most of the chava.

**Lag Ba'omer (May):** Party / workday / bonfire at the chava!

**Shevuot:** You probably won't be making much dairy on your chava, but Shevuot, which probably originated as the celebration of the first harvest is a great reason to get back up to machaneh, do some limud, keep planting, and maybe get your first lettuces. If you have asparagus going, it may be the perfect time to harvest.

**Tisha B'av (July-Aug):** Our culture is based on the Jews being a sedentary agricultural people in the land of Israel. The destruction of the 2nd temple marked the end of that way of life. What is Judaism if we are no longer tied to the Israeli agricultural cycle? Is farming outside of Israel "Jewish"? If we are so sad about the exile, why don't we all just go back?

**Sukkot:** (Sep-Oct) Go to camp to harvest your leftovers. Read about leaving the corners and what falls to the poor. Should we just leave the food there to rot? Should we donate it? Should we just eat it? Are these laws only about produce? You make the call.

**Shabbat:** You don't need to work to enjoy the *chava*. Shabbat is a perfect time for any non-work related activity in the *chava*. I did a peula about the food system for every *chug ritzini* (*Shabbat chug*) in 2006. Yoga, drawing, or stories would be great (probably better), too.



## SOME EXTRA IDEAS AND PEULA IDEAS TO JEWDAIZE YOUR CHAVA

**Plant Jewish plants** (can a plant be Jewish?): Of the seven species (*shivat ha'minim*) wheat, barley, and grapes can be grown in your *chava* (figs, pomegranates, olives and dates probably can't). Growing grains may sound lame, but they do make up some giant percentage of your diet. Seeing them grow (and maybe even making some flour out of them) can be a very meaningful experience, and connect us to our heritage.

There are lots of other Jewish plants, too. In fact almost every holiday has a plant or food associated with it. Try myrtle for your *lulov* (willow you can probably find nearby any body of water. Palm – not so much), *besamim* for havdala (can be anything), *karpas* (onions and garlic planted the previous fall, and certain types of perennial lettuces likely will have greens ready for the picking) and horseradish for *pesach*.

**Practice Shmitta:** The Jewish biblical tradition of *shmitta* teaches us not to plant every seventh year, the idea being somewhat along the lines of giving everyone – land, animals, workers, and landlords – a break. Not having a *chava* at your machaneh every 7th year seems unfortunate (and hard to coordinate given our 2 year generations) but luckily for you this commandment falls in the category of commandments that are only obligatory in the land of Israel (where a myriad of loopholes generally save anyone from practicing it anyway). But the thought behind the tradition is so important, it would be a shame to miss. I suggest having 7 (or 14) beds and every year not planting in one (or two) of them - a sort of rotational *shmitta*, if you will. It seems legit to plant a cover crop the year before and let it grow and protect the soil all year, but consult your local spiritual leader.

**Cook Jewish Food:** Jews love food, and you would be surprised how many historically Jewish dishes you can make using ingredients almost exclusively picked from your *chava*. Though Judaism has rarely been practiced as a vegetarian religion (save the Essenes, me, and many of my friends), life in the *shtetl* plus strict kosher laws simply did not allow for all that much meat eating. This unique part of our culinary history is celebrated in an excellent cookbook *Olive Trees and Honey* by Gil Marks, which is perhaps the most used cookbook in *Kvutza Aseef*, where I live. Some of our favorites, which lend themselves perfectly to chava-to-kitchen cooking,

include Turkish Leak Patties, Syrian Spinach Soup, Hungarian Asparagus Soup, Borscht – of course -- and the list pretty much goes on and on. For even more fun try pickling, which was the main way Jews stored vegetables through two thousand European winters. Read much more about it in Sander Katz's *Wild Fermentation* – also highly recommended.

**Celebrate the *chagim*:** See page 32.

## PEULA IDEAS

***Harchakat Nezikin*:** The *Talmudic* restrictions of *Harchakat Nezikin* (the distancing of damages) teach us that all precautions must be taken to ensure that activities done on private property do not harm nearby residents or their possessions. The regulations are elaborated on in Rambam's *Book of Acquisition: Neighbors Chapter XI*:

He who constructs on his property a threshing floor or a privy or does work which raises dust and particles of earth and the like must, in order that these do not do harm to his neighbor, do so at a distance where the particles of earth or dust will not reach his neighbor. Even if it is the wind that help carry the particles... he is obligated nevertheless to leave distance enough to prevent damage to his neighbor... because all of the instances are similar to doing damage with one's arrows.

Translation from <http://www.canfeinesharim.org/learning/torah.php?page=11872>

### Discussion Questions:

- Why are these rules necessary?
- Is taking precautions to ensure that you do not damage neighbors a Jewish act?
- Does your *chava* follow these regulations?
- Is anyone nearby being damaged by your farming?
- Is anything running off your *chava* (soil, chemicals, etc...) that could potentially do harm do downstream communities?
- Do other farms near you follow these regulations?
- Should these rules only apply to Jewish farmers?
- Who is responsible for ensuring that what happens on one person's land does not hurt the rest of us?

**Bal Tashchit:** The biblical prohibition on destroying fruit trees, even while laying siege to an enemy's city (*Dvarim* 20:19-20) forms the basis of bal tashchit - the restriction against any needless destruction and waste. The restrictions are elaborated on in Rambam's (once again) *Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings, 6 Laws 8-10*:

It is forbidden to cut down fruit-bearing trees outside a besieged city, nor may a water channel be deflected from them so they wither.... The penalty is imposed not only during a siege but rather anyone who cuts down a fruit bearing tree in a destructive manner is flogged...And not only trees, but anyone who smashes household goods, tears clothing, demolishes a building, stops a spring, or wastes articles of food in a destructive manner, is in violation of the command "you shall not destroy."

Translation from <http://www.canfeinesharim.org/learning/torah.php?page=11872>

And *Sefer HaChinuch, Parshat Shoftim, Mitzvah 529*:

"The root of the Mitzvah (Bal Tashchit) is well known – that it is to teach our souls to love the Good and the Greater Value and to cling to it. Therefore we should attach ourselves to the good and distance ourselves from anything that is bad and any type of destruction. This is the path for Hasidim (Righteous People) and People of Good Deeds – who love Peace and are happy with the goodness of the Creation and draw themselves close to Torah. They do not ever waste anything, even a kernel of mustard. They should fashion themselves in such a way that any wastefulness or destruction that they see – if they are able to (save) prevent it – they should save it from all forms of destructiveness with all their energy."

Translation from <http://www.canfeinesharim.org/learning/torah.php?page=11872>

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Why is Judaism so obsessed with not wasting?
- Why do all of the examples specifically mention food?
- Do we prevent all waste possible in our chava? How?
- Is composting uneaten food considered not wasting?
- 25-40% of the food grown in the conventional agricultural system in the US is never consumed. Losses are due to spoilage in transit and storage, inefficient use while cooking, food cooked but never consumed, and crops which were never profitable enough to harvest. Most of these scraps are thrown to the landfill. Is this a Jewish catastrophe?
- Is it against our culture or religion to participate in this wasteful society?
- Is it our duty to eat as much as we can (*ein lanu bizbuz!*)?
- What can we do about it?

***Kashrut and ethical-kashrut:*** When the soon-to-be Jews accepted the Torah at Mount Sinai (or as the Hebrews developed their own unique culture through hundreds of years of joint experience) they soon learned that being a part of their people meant that they couldn't eat whatever they wanted. This is a part of most all cultures – Americans don't eat dogs, Indians don't eat cows, Muslims don't eat pigs, I don't eat vegemite. The Jewish eating restrictions are jointly called *kashrut*. All of the rules of *kashrut* are based on 27 mitzvot described in *Deuteronomy* Chapters 12 and 14. They are:

1. To examine the marks in cattle (so as to distinguish the clean from the unclean) (Lev. 11:2).
2. Not to eat the flesh of unclean beasts (Lev. 11:4).
3. To examine the marks in fishes (so as to distinguish the clean from the unclean (Lev. 11:9).
4. Not to eat unclean fish (Lev. 11:11).
5. To examine the marks in fowl, so as to distinguish the clean from the unclean (Deut. 14:11).
6. Not to eat unclean fowl (Lev. 11:13).
7. To examine the marks in locusts, so as to distinguish the clean from the unclean (Lev. 11:21).
8. Not to eat a worm found in fruit (Lev. 11:41).
9. Not to eat of things that creep upon the earth (Lev. 11:41-42).
10. Not to eat any vermin of the earth (Lev. 11:44).
11. Not to eat things that swarm in the water (Lev. 11:43 and 46).
12. Not to eat of winged insects (Deut. 14:19).
13. Not to eat the flesh of a beast that is tereifah (lit torn) (Ex. 22:30) (Treif).
14. Not to eat the flesh of a beast that died of itself (Deut. 14:21).
15. To slay cattle, deer and fowl according to the laws of shechitah if their flesh is to be eaten (Deut. 12:21) ("as I have commanded" in this verse refers to the technique).
16. Not to eat a limb removed from a living beast (Deut. 12:23).
17. Not to slaughter an animal and its young on the same day (Lev. 22:28).
18. Not to take the mother-bird with the young (Deut. 22:6).
19. To set the mother-bird free when taking the nest (Deut. 22:6-7).
20. Not to eat the flesh of an ox that was condemned to be stoned (Ex. 21:28).
21. Not to boil meat with milk (Ex. 23:19).
22. Not to eat flesh with milk (Ex. 34:26) (according to the Talmud, this passage is a distinct prohibition from the one in Ex. 23:19).
23. Not to eat of the thigh-vein which shrank (Gen. 32:33).
24. Not to eat chelev (tallow-fat) (Lev. 7:23).
25. Not to eat blood (Lev. 7:26).
26. To cover the blood of undomesticated animals (deer, etc.) and of fowl that have been killed (Lev. 17:13).
27. Not to eat or drink like a glutton or a drunkard (not to rebel against father or mother) (Lev. 19:26; Deut. 21:20).

From <http://www.jewfaq.org/613.htm>

These rules are often understood as falling into distinct categories of hygiene and health (only eating what is safe), moral (how we treat animals), national (keeping ourselves distinct as a people and community building), mystical (eating food to heighten our spiritual state), and self restraint (because that is always good), or under the more religious understanding of “because God said so”.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- What are all of these rules?
- Where did they come from? (Just ‘cause? Taboo? Distinction? Ethical basis? Increasing intentionality?)
- Why aren’t there any obvious reasons stated next to the laws?
- Do morals and values seem to be a big part of kashrut?
- What other reasons could there be for kashrut (community building, test of belief, ancient cultural taboos, a lesson on self-restraint).
- Kosher means “fit”. Is a food “fit” if it follows all of these rules or should there be other considerations, too?
- Can food be kosher if *Bal Tashchit*, *Harchakat Nezikin*, and other Jewish commandments were violated in its production?
- Whose responsibility is it to decide if a food is kosher?
- Is food made on our chava kosher?
- Why is Judaism so obsessed with food, anyways?

Check out Magen Tzedek (<http://www.hekshertzedek.org/>) for way more on ethical kashrut.

**Tzdaka down on the farm:** Progressive Jews take pride in the rich tradition of generosity and responsibility we are commanded to take over our poor. Whenever we here of oppression of women in orthodox communities, scams in Jewish economic circles, rising poverty in Israel, improper use of force by the IDF, etc, we can always be calmed by reminding ourselves that these are acts done by Jews – not expressions of Jewish values. The Torah has thirteen specific commandments in regards to our treatment towards the poor and unfortunate:

1. Not to afflict an orphan or a widow (Ex. 22:21).
2. Not to reap the entire field (Lev. 19:9; Lev. 23:22).
3. To leave the unreaped corner of the field or orchard for the poor (Lev. 19:9) .
4. Not to gather gleanings (the ears that have fallen to the ground while reaping) (Lev. 19:9).
5. To leave the gleanings for the poor (Lev. 19:9).
6. Not to gather ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard (Lev. 19:10).
7. To leave ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10; Deut. 24:21).
8. Not to gather the peret (grapes) that have fallen to the ground (Lev. 19:10).
9. To leave peret (the single grapes) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10).
10. Not to return to take a forgotten sheaf (Deut. 24:19) This applies to all fruit trees (Deut. 24:20).
11. To leave the forgotten sheaves for the poor (Deut. 24:19-20).
12. Not to refrain from maintaining a poor man and giving him what he needs (Deut. 15:7).
13. To give charity according to one's means (Deut. 15:11).

From <http://www.jewfaq.org/613.htm>

### **Discussion Questions:**

- How many of these rules are relevant only to farmers (10!)?
- Are non-farmers not obliged to take responsibility over the poor?
- Can these rules be simply transferred to be relevant in the modern Jewish economy?
- Is an agricultural economy the only one that makes sense for Jews?
- How big should your unreaped corners be?
- Why doesn't it say?
- Who should decide?
- How can we follow these *mitzvot* at our *chava*?
- Do we want to?



**Baruch Ha...:** Jewish ritual demands of us to say a blessing before eating. But it's not that simple. A "*motzi lechem min ha'aretz*" won't necessarily cut it – unless you are eating a full meal that includes bread. For everything else you are going to have to know a little bit about what you are about to eat before you can actually bless it. There are five categories of food with their own separate blessings:

**Grain products** – M'zonot (Before eating non-bread products of wheat, barley, rye, oats, or spelt (and rice, according to many opinions):

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, בורא מיני מזונות.

Transliteration: Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha olam, bo're minei m'zonot.

Translation: "Blessed are You, LORD, our God, King of the universe, who creates varieties of nourishment."

**Wine** – Ha-Gafen: This blessing is made for wine made from grapes, but not any other fermented drink. Wine made from other fruits, and other alcohols, require the Shehakol blessing (see below).

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

Transliteration: Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha olam, bo're p'ri ha gafen.

Translation: "Blessed are You, LORD, our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine."

**Fruit** – Ha-Etz: For fruits which from from a tree

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי העץ.

Transliteration: Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha olam, bo're p'ri ha etz.

Translation: "Blessed are You, LORD, our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree."

**Non-fruit produce** – Ha-Adama: For produce that grew directly from the earth:

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי האדמה.

Transliteration: Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha olam, bo're p'ri ha adama.

Translation: Blessed are you, LORD, our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the ground."

**Other foods** – She-Hakol: For food or drink not in the first four categories:

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, שהכל נהיה בדברו.

Transliteration: Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha olam, shehakol nih'ye bidvaro.

Translation: "Blessed are you, LORD, our God, King of the universe, through whose word everything comes into being."

Chaim Nachman Bialik, the late poet laureate of the State of Israel had a very different version of a blessing to say before meals (this may look familiar):

Who will save us from hunger? Who will feed us with plenty of bread? Who will pour us a glass of milk? To whom are we thankful? Whom do we bless? To labor and to toil!	מי יצילנו מרעב? ומי יאכילנו לחם רב? ומי ישקנו כוס חלב? למי תודה? למי ברכה? לעבודה ולמלאכה!
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### Discussion Questions:

- Why so many blessings?
- Why do you have to know where the food comes from in order to bless it?
- What are you blessing?
- What are you thankful for every time you eat?
- How do you express it?
- Is there a place for blessings if you don't believe in God?
- What should you say when you eat food from your *chava*?

*There is also a hilarious This American Life episode (281 – My Big break, Act Three. Oedipus Hex) about these blessings which you can listen to at [http://www.thisamericanlife.org/Radio\\_Episode.aspx?sched=1280](http://www.thisamericanlife.org/Radio_Episode.aspx?sched=1280)*

***Is food activism Jewish?*** On a June 18, 2008 post to JCarrot.org, Daniel Bloom wrote:

Hazon and The Jew & The Carrot may be the homes of the new Jewish food movement, but in a way the general food movement, even without the 'Jewish' modifier, is still very Jewish. I am not referring to the fact that, much like many progressive movements, a disproportionate number of the food movement's major protagonists, like Michael Pollen, Peter Singer, or Mollie Katzen, are Jewish. Rather, that the questions and challenges posed by the food movement are the types of questions and challenges the Jewish tradition has been raising for millennia

*Taken from <http://jcarrot.org/home-grown-did-jews-start-the-food-movement>.*

But let's focus on the first half of his statement: the new food movement – like the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, the abolitionist movement, and generally most progressive movements in US history – is overly represented by Jewish activists. How Sander Katz didn't make this short list is a mystery, but we will forgive Mr. Bloom, for now.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Is fighting for food (or any) justice a Jewish activity?
- Why do most of these activists not relate to other parts of their Judaism?
- Why is food a hot topic in so many non-affiliated Jewish communities?
- Why is mainstream Judaism so out of touch with what is important for today's secular Jews?
- Does it have to be?
- What does *Habonim Dror* have to do with this?

## SOME EXTRA IDEAS AND *PEULA* CONCEPTS TO ISRAELIZE YOUR *CHAVA*

Your *chava* can be the ideal place to connect your *chanichim* to Israel. Perhaps not so much to current events (if the tomatoes and the peppers vote no-confidence, could the cucumber government hold together their coalition?), but definitely to Israeli culture (especially food) and really definitely to the core principles of Zionism – connection to the land, self-labor, regeneration of the individual, regeneration of the nation, etc.

### Israel Today

**Make Israeli Food!** “Israeli salad” is pretty much tomatoes, cucumbers, and anything else you have cut into cubes and dressed with olive oil and salt. Eggplant salad (often called *Baba ganush* but not in Israel) is very popular and almost as easy. Just bake eggplant until the skins start to burn (30 minutes should be fine), peel off the skins, and mix the insides with teflon, lemon juice, salt and pepper. If you have chickens, *shakshuka* is an obvious must. You can make the tomato-based sauce with your veggies, too. All of these foods have fascinating histories with reasons why they are thought of as Israeli. Check out some recipe books for the inside scoop.

**Learn Hebrew!** Duh. Though *Zman Ivrit* is a perennial challenge at *machaneh*, *chanichim* do pick up a tremendous amount of Hebrew every session. How? They quickly learn the words which are around them - the Hebrew words engrained into *Habonim Dror* culture. You can quickly give the *chava* a more Israeli atmosphere, and teach the *chanichim* (and yourself) a bunch of new vocabulary by calling the vegetables by their Hebrew names, learning the Hebrew names of plants and insects, and even throwing in some new verbs: to pick (*liktof* / לקטוף), to harvest (*liktzor* / רוצקל), to water (*lehashkot* / לקצור), and to weed (*le'asev* / לעשב) would be a good start. Ask your friendly *shaliach* for help.

# PEULA IDEAS

**Labor as a virtue:** Early Zionism championed the idea of manual labor. Work was seen as supremely important in crafting the new Jew who would settle the Land of Israel and build the Jewish state. The rich were to work; the poor were to work; the political elite were to work. Hertzl even proposed a system to ensure meaningful, productive work for the retired and the elderly in his novel *Altneuland* in order to “seek for all ages, for all stages of life, the physical happiness and moral blessing of work.” This aura of work continued throughout the Zionist project. As Ben Gurion said in his Address to the Anglo American Committee of Enquiry just before the Declaration of Independence:

We do not consider manual work a curse. It is a bitter necessity. It is a means of making a living. But in our eyes it is also a lofty human function, the basis of human life, the most dignified think in a man's essence. It ought to be free, creative. Men ought to be proud of it. (1946)

## Discussions questions:

- What is so great about labor?
- Why was it so virtuous in early Israel?
- When the physical building of the country becomes less important, does manual labor become less important, too?
- How do you feel when you are working?
- Why does some manual work make people feel proud, while other manual work makes people feel angry?
- Which things at *machaneh* are done through our labor?
- Which are not?
- How does this affect our relationship to *machaneh*?

**Labor as building the individual:** Labor wasn't seen just as a source of joy and fulfillment, it was seen as the movement's prime educational tool. As Yitzchak Tabenkin, wrote in *Education Towards the Image of the Worker* at the Decade Convention of “*Hechalutz Hatzair*”:

In this time certain enterprises were created that express the occurring revolution, the processes that change the way of life. The enterprise of Hachshara in Klosowa and “Hachalutz Hatzair” are a part of the spirit of the Jewish revolution that has been going on for more than 100 years, combined with the movement of the socialist revolution which strives to end the enslavement of man by man.

The achievements of “Hechalutz Hatzair” and the Hachshara in Klosowa may not be outstanding after 10 years of existence; neither in the political field or the economic one. For what did Klosowa deal with? Are the stones carved in its quarry or the crops reaped by its members its achievements? The material values created by them

are not an expression toward the human value embodied in this enterprise. The stone was not merely a means to achieve a salary, but mainly a means to change something in the Jewish person. The stone was carved in order to carve the person. In order to make him a conqueror of land, a man of labor, a man of commune, who believes in the brotherhood of men. The value of Klosowa appeared in the shaping of the image of the Jewish person, in shaping the image of masses of Jewish youth in the Diaspora. Therefore the financial achievement is not to justify Klosowa's existence, as much as financial failures, i.e. loss of money- are not to abolish it.

...What was our movement's image of man? It was the image of the anonymous soldier: me, you, and him. As we sing in Tshernichovsky's song: "you are the Macca-bean" - it was the image which is hidden in you, and needs to be carved out. Like the act of the sculptor who envisions the image of the sculpture hidden in gross material, and his work in revealing the image is by removing the superfluous. In front of our eyes was not the superior image of man one must strive to resemble. This image of us exists: it exists in each and every one of us. Remove known parts from yourself, and by itself the image of the ideal Chalmutz will float and rise. The new thing about our movement is in seeing each individual as a matter from which one carves their own image as a worker, a Zionist, a commune member... in aiming at the Hagshama of this simplicity in daily lives there was a great deal of personal exertion, towards a future revolution.

Klosowa! What does this name stand for? It captures the possibility of every youngster, every simple person in Israel to become a worker, to become different. This possibility has been like an epidemic that did not pass over any Jewish home in the Shteitel- the possibility that can be achieved by "me, you and him". Anyone can achieve it, fulfill it.

There was something of a legendary power in the rumor that here there are simple people carving rocks and while they are doing that they are singing and dancing and living as a commune, and they are not extra-ordinary people of specialness, and anyone can be and live like them. It was not a legend of a hero or a leader commanding us to follow his way, obey him, accept his authority- no! The idea said "me and you" can be different: we can all reveal the thing which is, in fact, hidden within us. (1934)

### Discussion Questions:

- How did the stone cutting at Klosowa shape these early *chalmutzim*?
- Could any other activity have educated them as well?
- What were the educational goals of Klosowa?
- How has farming this session affected who you are as a person?
- What should be the educational goals of having chalmutzim work as farmers in machaneh?
- How did the daily life of early *chalmutzim* as farmers affect them as they became the leadership of the young state?
- How does the non-agricultural background of today's Israeli leaders affect them and the development of the state?

**Labor and becoming a normal people:** Labor wasn't appreciated only for the positive affects it had on the building of character, it was also seen as critical in the true re-binding of the Jewish people to the land of Israel, and as the basis for creating a new Hebrew culture. Ber Borochov saw the economic "inverted pyramid" of European Jewry, where most people were distant from the land and very few worked close to it as, a national problem solvable only through Zionism:

The socio-economic structure of the Jewish people differs radically from that of other nations. Ours is an anomalous, abnormal structure...

Aristotle distinguishes between two modes of gaining a livelihood: first, the livelihood gained from nature; and second, the livelihood gained from man. The farmer, mountaineer, or fisherman gains his livelihood from nature; the business man, the banker, or the physician gains his from man.

In terms of this distinction, it is obvious that Jews, in contradistinction to all other nations, derive their livelihood exclusively from man...

The landlessness of the Jewish people is the source of its malady and tragedy. We have no territory of our own, hence we are by necessity divorced by nature. Therefore, given the recently developed environment of capitalistic production and competition, this abnormal circumstance quite naturally assumes proportions of an acute and dangerous nature....

For hundreds of years the Jewish masses have blindly searched for a way that will return them to nature, to the soil. At last we have found it. Zionism is the way. Zionism is the logical, natural consequence of the economic revolution that has been going on within Jewish life for the past few hundred years. Even in the Galut, our people have been striving to turn to more "natural" and more productive occupations, but this radical change cannot come to its full fruition in the hostile atmosphere of the Galut.

Zionism is the only movement capable of introducing reason, order, and discipline into Jewish life. Zionism is the only answer to the economic and historic need of the Jewish people. --*The Economic Development of the Jewish People* (1916)

### **Discussion Questions:**

- In your experience what is the difference between working from nature, and working from man?
- What is the problem with a people who earns its livelihood by man?
- How did this affect the Jewish experience in 2000 years of the Diaspora?
- Why couldn't the Jews create a more "normal" nature based economy outside of Israel in the early 1900s?
- Can they now?
- Is this "inverted pyramid" structure, which the Jews in the Diaspora still maintain, a problem today?
- Why does Borochov see Zionism as the "only answer"? - Do you?
- Does farming at *machaneh*, outside of Israel, have anything to do with the "answer"?

**Avoda Ivrit and the creation of culture:** A.D. Gordon added than only through a labor based nation can we create any sort of real culture:

We are a people without a country, without a national living language, without a national culture. We seem to think that if we have no labour it does not matter - let Ivan, John or Mustafa do the work, while we busy ourselves with producing a culture, with creating national values and with enthroning absolute justice in the world.

But truth to tell, we neither have nor shall we be able to have a culture in the Galut, that is, a living culture, one that draws its nourishment from life and develops from within itself. We have no culture because we have no life, for life in the Diaspora is not our own life...

A living culture embraces the whole of life. Whatever man creates for the sake of life is culture: the tilling of the soil, the building of homes, of all kinds of buildings, the paving of roads, and so on. Each piece of work, each deed, each act, is an element of culture. Herein is the foundation of culture, the stuff of which it is made... What a man does, what he feels, things, lives, while he is at work, and while he is not working, the conditions arising from these situations, together with living nature underlying all the relations – these mold themselves into the spirit of culture.

Higher culture draws its nourishment from science, art, beliefs, and opinions, from poetry, ethics, religion. Higher culture or, culture in its restrictive sense, the culture to which we especially apply the term when we speak of culture, is the butter of culture in general, of culture in its broadest sense. But is it possible to make butter without milk or make butter from milk belonging to others, and will the butter then be his very own? – *Our Task Ahead* (1920)

### **Discussion Questions:**

- What is the base of our culture at *machaneh*?
- How does avoda fit into our culture?
- Why does Gordon say that you need to base a culture on work?
- How would our culture change if someone else did all of our work • Would we, too, have "no culture".
- Do we need to be in Israel to create the type of culture Gordon is speaking of?



**Avoda Ivrit and re-connection to the land:** Gordon also saw the idea of Avoda Ivrit (Hebrew Labor) in Eretz Israel as the only true way for the Jews to lay claim to their historic homeland:

If we do not till the soil with our very own hands, the soil will not be ours – not only not ours in a social, or in a national, but even in a political sense. The lands will not be ours and we shall not be the people of the land. Here, then, we shall also be aliens just as in the lands of the Diaspora where, too, there are Jews who rent land, who buy fields, gardens, orchards, and traffic in the fruit of the labor of others. It is only to the degree that we here possess settlements and farms in which the work is done wholly by us that we shall become citizens and natives of the land. – *The Simple Truth*

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Why is it important that we do our own labour instead of having someone else do it or paying someone else to do it?
- What are some things that you have made for yourself in your life? What things at machaneh have you done or made with our own labour?
- Does avoda at machaneh make the land “ours”?
- If machaneh started hiring people for toranut and bruit, would machaneh become less ours?
- Could the Jews have recreated a home in Israel without taking responsibility for the labor?
- If today much of the construction and agricultural work in Israel is done by foreign labor, does that make Israel less “ours”? Or is that just how the modern economy works?

**Drip irrigation and the fulfillment of the Jewish national destiny:** Just 60 some years after it's establishment and 100 some years since Jews began moving *en masse* to *Eretz Yisrael*, the State of Israel has become a world scientific, technological, and industrial leader. *Hasbara* Israel advocates love to respond to charges of oppression and violence, with chants of ICQ, cell phones, and cutting edge Israeli medical procedures. When David ben Gurion talked of measuring the success of the Jewish regeneration in Palestine he even eluded to the importance of Israel contributing to the worlds, not just the Jews, progress:

“For the measure of success in our revolution is the full ingathering of the exiles in a socialist Jewish State. But in history no goal can be the last, and this ingathering is itself only a stepping stone to fulfillment of our people's destiny. Only when we throw off the fetters by which, as society and nation, we are constricted, and are free men again on the soil of a free Homeland, nationally independent and equal as men, only then will we be fit to perform man's great mission on earth and harness to man's advancement the secrets of the elements and the inventions of our own genius in all its originality and

strength." *The Imperatives of the Jewish Revolution, An Address to the Youth Section of Mapai* (1944)

Perhaps one of Israel's most important contributions both to itself, and the world, is drip irrigation. By placing water in small amounts, directly on the soil, near plant roots, drip irrigation drastically reduces water losses to runoff and evaporation typical to sprinkler and gravity irrigation systems. This allows farmers to grow more food with far less water, and will undoubtedly be crucial to allowing the world to continue to feed its growing population on fewer resources and ever changing climatic conditions. The first commercial producer of drip irrigation, Netafim, still operates out of *Kibbutz Chatzerim*, as well as several other global locations, and Israel continues to lead the way in arid climate agricultural research.

### Discussion Questions:

- Is the development of drip irrigation the "performance of man's great mission on earth"?
- Is it the "inventions of our own genius in all its originality and strength"?
- The developments were supposed to come after we had become truly free people. Have we Jews / society already reached that stage?
- Is this the true expressions of the Zionist dream?

**Chalutzot:** Woman have played an active and important role in the Zionist movements since its inception. This has come only thanks to the efforts of the women themselves whom have had to struggle to gain and retain their status as equal to men since the movement's inception. Early into the Second *Aliya* Techiah Liberson, a young chalutza from Russia wrote:

When I came to Petach Tikvah in 1905 some Jewish workers were already there. There were only four girls among them: two seamstresses, one stocking knitter, and one who received remittances from her parents. In the season both seamstresses would turn orange packers. But my heart was set on plain labor on the soil. Three days after my arrival I went out to work with the spade for one bishlik (twelve and a half cents) a day. I worked in Gissin's vineyard, and my job was to fill up the holes around the trees.

I used to come home evenings to the colony without any tools, and for a whole month I would leave the regular path and make my way through backyards, so that no one should know that I was working with the men. The workers themselves were against my choice - they were genuinely afraid that I would break down under the labor. They urged me to work with the other girls at the orange packing - but I would not listen. I wanted to work with the spade.

It was comrade S. who first gave me courage to continue. He was the teacher in the colony; and he shifted the school hours so as to be able to come out and take

turns with me at the work. In this way, while our comrades took only one hour's rest during the middle of the day, I took three. S. also talked about me to the owner of the vineyard, who assured him that in time I would become a good worker. Two weeks later the owner raised my pay by half a piastre -making a full three piastres a day. I was astonished, and asked him whether he had done this because I was a Jewish girl or because I was really worth it...

My work with the spade lasted a month, and after that I passed over to orange picking. During the first two days I worked for nothing. When my first basket was filled, I submitted it to the overseer, who went through it, orange by orange. He found three which had been touched by the scissors. My heart was in my mouth - I was certain he would send me home. But in the second basket there was only one damaged orange - and from then on I was a perfect orange picker. When my work on this orchard was finished the overseer sent me to a second. I became known as a skilled orange picker, and work was easy to find. -- *The Plough Woman* (1932)

Liberson's account of wanting to work, finding it difficult to be accepted, and having to prove her worth is typical of the *chalutzah* experience.

### **Disucussion Questions:**

- Why was it so important for Liberson to work?
- Why didn't she want to do typical female jobs?
- How did women insistence on equality affected the Zionist movement?
- Why was it not obvious that even during the Second *Aliya*, whose *chalutzim* based their values on absolute freedom and equality, that men and woman would be treated equally?
- Do the gains the *chalutzot* accomplished still exist today?
- At *machaneh*, do woman and men do the same jobs? In the *chava*?
- How does this affect the environment at *machaneh*?

**Habonim Dror and Avoda:** In the last 60 years Habonim Dror has mirrored the trend of Labor Zionism in its slow move away from Labor. The change can be seen in the evolution of *hachshara*. In a 1944 report from the Habonim Cream Ridge training farm Shoshan Kliers wrote:

Since the present group on hachshara established itself as a kibbutz baderech, a group on the way to settlement, it has accomplished certain concrete objectives. The progress made during the summer and fall of 1944 can be noted by physical landmarks on the farm. As always, the plans for the seasons were maximum. Our work program included building, purchasing of livestock, expanding our egg route, and field program.

The building plan was ambitious and was carried through enthusiastically. Finishing the new barn, we added an adjoining milk room. A long-needed machinery shed was erected and used during the summer months to house the members of Camp Avodah. The purchase of nine Guernsey cows and one heifer increased our herd to eleven milkers and six calves. Subsequently, we started to sell our milk to a local dairy at a fair profit.

Unfortunately, the planting program was much impeded by the summer's drought. The vegetable garden, in particular, suffered severe damage. Nevertheless, we canned about three thousand jars of our own produce. Corn was put up for silage in a temporary silo. The grain harvest was fair, and the hay harvest—three cuttings—was good.

Our retail egg route in Trenton was expanded from three to four days, from three to four hundred customers. The chief source of our income, poultry, suffered from the hurricane that hit this section of the country. Taken from *Arise and Build* (1960)

Due to financial and political troubles of the *hachshara* farms, and the establishment of the State of Israel, they were eventually closed all together and replaced by the *Workshop – Shnat Hachshara in Israel*:

In 1951, the smaller chalutz organizations began to liquidate their farms; and Habonim was faced with the alternative of maintaining its two remaining farms, Smithville and Cream Ridge, at all costs, or finding another form for the presentation of the final stage of education towards chalutzit. Having conducted a number of very successful leadership courses in Israel, Habonim had come to the conclusion that experience and observation in Israel itself were the most effective way of educating towards aliya. Thus, gradually the idea of the Workshop evolved—a program of work and study in Israel, based on the kibbutz, for a selected group of high school graduates, mostly from the ranks of Habonim, who had a positive attitude towards the idea of eventually settling in Israel.

Since 1999, the Workshop has been spending less time on *kibbutz* and more time living in cities doing educational messima with Israeli youth. The four to five months spent on *kibbutz* is not used not for avoda, but instead focuses on educational seminars geared towards building a comprehensive understanding of Jewish history people hood, and identity.

**Discussion Questions:**

- Why have we, as a movement, been moving away from labor as an ideal and educational tool?
- Are the messages of early labor Zionism no longer valid?
- If we are collectively moving away, why should we insist on keeping a chava at machaneh?
- Should *Habonim* start reclaiming labor as a value?
- Can we balance our need to shape ourselves through labor with the immediate need to educate Diaspora and Israeli Jewish youth?
- Do the two contradict?

## A SAMPLE PEULA

All of the peulot ideas above were left only as ideas on purpose. Do not run a peula reading the text and asking the questions. That would be lame – at least for *machaneh* age *chanichim*. You must plan the peulot yourself: skim through lots of sources, pose the questions to yourself and your tzevet, ask yourself which questions are most relevant to *chanichim*, and decide together how you can make the topic fun and interesting. With that start, a successful *peula* is practically guaranteed. But, because I like you, I am leaving here one complete peula which I ran to introduce the Na'aleh tzevet to their new *chava* in June 2008. The rest is up to you. -Good luck!

### ***Chava intro peula for madrichim***

#### **Goals:**

- Madrichim become acquainted with the *chava*- the work that goes into it, the physical space, the food it will grow, and its potential as a *chinuch* tool.
- *Madrichim* will connect the *chava* to cultural Judaism.
- *Madrichim* will feel that they are a part of the *chava* and can contribute to it as a productive, physical, or educational space.

**Method:** *Madrichim* will go through four stations of *gan avoda* for 15 minutes each. At each station there will also be a small reading or quote which relates the *avoda* to something cool.

**Station 1 - Hard labor:** *Madrichim* will dig a bed and top it with compost. We will read Gordon about how working the land is the only way to truly "own" it.

The Jewish people has been completely cut off from nature and imprisoned within city walls for two thousand years. We have been accustomed to every form of life, except a life of labour- of labour done at our behalf and for its own sake. It will require the greatest effort of will for such a people to become normal again. We lack the principal ingredient for national life. We lack the habit of labour... for it is labour which binds a people to its soil and to its national culture, which in its turn is an outgrowth of the people's toil and the people's labour.

Now it is turn that every people have many individuals who shun physical labour and try to live off the work of others... We Jews have developed an attitude of looking

down on physical labour.... But labour is the only force which binds man to the soil... it is the basic energy for the creation of national culture. This is what we do not have, but we are not aware of missing it. We are a people without a country, without a national living language, without a national culture. We seem to think that if we have no labour it does not matter - let Ivan, John or Mustafa do the work, while we busy ourselves with producing a culture, with creating national values and with enthroning absolute justice in the world.

#### Questions:

- Why does a people have to do labor to be “normal”?
- How does labor bind a people to its soil? Does it bind a *machaneh* to its soil?
- How do we create a culture which values labor?
- Can we “enthroned absolute justice in the world” without any physical labor?

**Station 2 - Thinning:** We will weed and thin the lettuce. After we will have a short discussion about what is “thinning” or bringing order into our lives. We all have thousands of things would like to do or develop, but in order for any one thing to work, we must focus. Everyone will give an example of this from their lives.

**Station 3 - Seeding:** We will plant perennial herb seeds into trays. Start with a commandant:

“When you come into the land, you shall plant” *Leviticus 19:23*

#### Questions

- Why are we commanded to plant as soon as we get there? Where is there? Can there be here?
- So, there are lots of Jewish festivals and traditions around times of harvest (*shevuot, sukhot, pesach*) – the times when you actually see the tangible rewards of farming – but there are also Jewish traditions to mark the act of planting. Before we get to the blessings, what is special/sacred about the act of planting itself?
- Planting can be a time to appreciate the force of life, and the potential in everything. It's a moment for gratitude and also for trust. Trust in the conditions: soil - that it has all the right nutrients and textures, the sun – that it will shine, the clouds – that will bring rain, the seed itself – that it will know what to do; and also trust in yourself, that you know what the seed needs, when to help and when to let it grow.
- How is growing a seed like being a *madrich*?

In Judaism, you say 2 prayers before you plant a seed (or seeing wonders of nature, including sunrises, shooting stars, vast deserts)

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם, עושה מעשה בראשית

*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh Ha'olam oseh ma'aseh b'reshit.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who continually does the work of creation.

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh Ha'olam, shehecheyanu, v'kimanu, v'higianu laz'man hazeh.*

Blessed Are You, Adonai, our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has kept us in life, and preserved us, and enabled us to reach this season.

- Now we fill the pots with soil.
- What blessing do you want to say before you plant? Everyone makes a blessing (English is fine!)
- The seed is planted!

**Station 4 - Tour of the garden:** Show around, explain how we created it, point out what's growing where, the fence, the compost, the scarecrow, etc... As the tour goes on bring up dilemmas for the *madrichim* to think about:

D1: How big should the garden be? The bigger, the more food, but the harder take care of. God commanded us to be stewards of the land ("And G-d took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to work (till) it and to keep (protect) it." Genesis 2:15) but that doesn't mean to dominate it. How much should we cultivate? How much should we leave?

D2: Our eggplants have been attacked by pests. What should we do? Let them be killed? Spray them? Squish each one with our fingers? Manage them with organic insecticides? How do we balance our desire to grow food with our commitment to take care of the earth?

D3: What should we plant? Radishes grow real fast but kids don't always like them. Corn grows slow but is so delicious. Transplants grow faster but cost a lot more. Seeds are slower but cheap. How do you balance?

Sicha: At the end of the rotation everyone gather for a discussion. We start with a quote:

"Said Rabbi Yose ben Rabbi Bun: It is forbidden to live in a town in which there is no garden" - *Talmud Yerushalmi, Kiddushin 4:12*



- Why? Why not a city which grows all its own food? Or for every individual to have a garden?
- What is Jewish about a garden?
- Should it be forbidden to have a Jewish summer camp without a garden?

“Build houses and dwell in them; plant gardens and eat the fruit of them.” - *Jeremiah 29:5*

**Sikum:**

- What place do we want the *chava* to have at Na'aleh?
- Brainstorm on whiteboard

## BOOKS (MENTIONED ALREADY OR NOT) THAT YOU MUST HAVE

*Carrots Love Tomatoes: Secrets of Companion Planting for Successful Gardening* (1998) by Louise Riotte. Helps you plan how to x vegetables in time and space in order to naturally prevent pests.

*Food For Thought: Hazon's Sourcebook on Jews, Food & Contemporary Life* (2007) by Nigel Savage and Anna Stevenson. Everything you could ever ask for on the connection between Judaism, food and agriculture.

*French Fries and the Food System: A Year-Round Curriculum Connecting Youth with Farming and Food* (2001) by Sara Coblyn. A brilliant book put out by the Boston based Food Project filled with peulot (I mean activities) connecting team-based agricultural work with the modern food system.

*Olive Trees and Honey: A Treasury of Vegetarian Recipes from Jewish Communities Around the World* (2004) by Gil Marks. Delicious Jewish food you can make with your harvest.

*The Jewish Gardening Cookbook: Growing Plants and Cooking for Holidays and Festivals* (2001) by Michael P. Brown. Helps you plan what to plant in your garden to get the maximum use out of it for Jewish Holidays.

*The Vegetable Gardener's Bible: Discover Ed's High-Yield W-O-R-D System for All North American Gardening Regions* (2000) by Edward C. Smith. My favorite book for vegetable by vegetable tips in your raised bed organic garden.

*Wild Fermentation: The Flavor, Nutrition, and Craft of Live-Culture Foods* (2003) by Sandor Ellix Katz and Sally Fallon. How to pickle and preserve your food for next year, with a nice culturally Jewish twist.

## GLOSSARY OF HEBREW TERMS

**Aliya:** Lit – To go up. Also, to move to Israel. When preceded by a number (1st, 2nd, etc) refers to a specific wave of immigration to Israel.

**Amelim:** Lit – Toilers. In Habonim – The youngest chanichim, generally age 9-10

**Anaf:** Lit – Branch. Also a work “branch” or group.

**Bayit:** Lit – House. At Tavor, the old building which serves as a center of madrich activity. No chanichim!

**Beit Knesset:** Lit – house of gathering. Synagogue.

**Besamim:** Fragrant herbs

**Chadar ochel:** Dining hall

**Chagim:** Holidays

**Chalutz:** Pioneer

**Chanichim:** Camper

**Chava:** Farm

**Cheder Chinuch:** Educational resource room

**Chofesh:** Free time

**Chugim:** Special interest groups

**Ein lanu bizbuz:** Lit – “we have no waste”. A chant introduced into Habonim in the 90’s in order to encourage chanichim to limit environmentally damaging wasteful activities.

**Eretz:** Land, country.

**Habonim:** Lit – the builders. Often used instead of Habonim Dror, to refer to the Labor Zionist youth movement.

**Hachshara:** Preparation

**Hasbara:** Positive public relations to improve the Image of Israel. Derived from the verb to explain.

**Havdala:** The saturday night ceremony which concludes Shabbat and starts the week.

**Hitcansut:** Gathering of the entire camp, generally for flag raising or lowering. Also called mifkad.

**Karpas:** A green vegetable ceremonially eaten at Pesach

**Kibbutz:** Originally, a Jewish, socialist, agricultural settlement in Israel. Today, whatever

each remains of the original settlement..

**Kvutzat Aseef:** A Habonim Dror communa in Israel

**Lag Ba’omer:** A celebration on the 33 day of the counting of the Omer

**Limud:** Study, learning. Generally done in groups.

**Lulov:** A set of plants you shake under the Sukkah on sukkot.

**Machaneh:** Camp

**Messima:** Lit- mission.

**Mifkad:** Like Hitcansut, but the name has more of a military connotation.

**Mirpa’a:** Infirmary. Often called the “marp”.

**Mitbach:** Kitchen

**Moadon:** Clubhouse, nightclub.

**Pesach:** Passover

**Peulot:** Activities

**Rakezet:** Coordinator

**Ritzinim:** Serious. Often shortened to “ritz”.

**Rosh:** Head, as in the body part, or, as in head of the organization.

**Sadnaot:** Workshops

**Shaliach:** Emissary. An Israeli who works at machaneh in order to bring a special focus on Israel.

**Shichva:** Lit – layer. In Habonim – age group.

**Shivat ha’minim:** The seven species which the Torah says the Land of Israel is full of.

**Shmitta:** The commanded 7th year rest of the land.

**Sicha:** Conversation

**Sukkot:** The holiday of the Tabernacle

**Tafkid:** Position

**Tu B’shavat:** The holiday of the trees

**Tzdaka:** That which is given in pursuit of Tzedek. Often translated to charity.

**Tzedek:** Justice

**Yovel:** The 50th year (7 shmitot + 1 year) described in the Torah, when all land returns to its original owner and all slaves are freed.

**Zman:** Lit - Time. In Habonim often followed by a descriptor i.e. Zman Sport

